



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

Steven L. Beshear, Governor

Leonard K. Peters, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Bill Caldwell, 502-564-3410

State Announces Water Shortage Watch for 27 Counties *Citizens urged to heed local water-use advisories*

Frankfort, Ky. (July 6, 2012) – As a result of continuing high temperatures and limited rainfall, the Energy and Environment Cabinet today announced a water shortage watch for 27 counties in Kentucky. Citizens living in these areas should closely monitor local news sources for notification from water suppliers on reducing demands for water.

A Water Shortage Watch is issued when drought conditions have the potential to threaten the normal availability of drinking water supply sources. Officials at the Kentucky Division of Water (DOW) study rainfall amounts, reservoir levels, streamflows, the Palmer Drought Index and the Drought Monitor when determining drought status.

All Kentuckians should increase their awareness of the current drought situation and prepare to make adjustments to their water use.

The following counties, listed by Drought Management Area (DMA), meet the criteria to be included in the water watch:

Barren River DMA – Monroe, Simpson, Warren

Buffalo Trace DMA – Fleming, Robertson

Bluegrass DMA – Anderson, Bourbon, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Scott, Woodford

Cumberland Valley DMA – Whitley

Green River DMA – Webster

Kentucky River DMA – Lee, Owsley

Northern Kentucky DMA – Owen, Pendleton

Pennyrile DMA – Crittenden

High temperatures combined with precipitation deficits frequently create surges in the demand for water, often exceeding a water supplier's ability to meet that demand. Many communities in the Water Shortage Watch areas have issued local water advisories in response to unusually

high demands and reduced raw water supplies. Citizens in the Water Shortage Watch areas should be prepared to reduce water use upon request by their local water supplier.

In areas not included in this Water Shortage Watch, water supply sources remain at acceptable levels, but capacity issues associated with high temperatures and dry conditions have prompted local water advisories in several counties. Citizens across the Commonwealth should heed local water suppliers' requests for water conservation when local advisories are issued.

In all areas of Kentucky, self-supplied individuals on wells or other small sources should avoid excessive water use and report losses of water supply to their county health department.

State climatologist Stuart Foster said "the combined impact of dry conditions and extremely hot temperatures at this time is causing a one-two punch."

"An exceptionally dry June throughout the state coupled with some record-high temperatures over the past week have caused drought conditions to intensify and spread eastward to cover most of Kentucky," said Foster. "The current situation is reminiscent of 1988, while there are some indications that persistence of the current hot and dry pattern that would trigger comparisons to droughts from the 1930s."

Agriculture has been particularly hard hit in western Kentucky counties.

"The timing of the drought on corn has already and will continue to reduce yields significantly," said University of Kentucky Agricultural Meteorologist Tom Priddy. "Doubled-cropped soybeans are having a difficult time with germination. Ponds are running low for irrigation purposes and watering of livestock. Western and central locations may be near the point where rain would provide little benefit for corn and soybean growth, development and yield."

DOW Drought Coordinator Bill Caldwell said public water suppliers play a vital role in helping drought specialists monitor the drought's progression.

"Water suppliers in the 27-county watch area and throughout the state should closely monitor their supply sources and notify the Division of Water if water shortages occur," said Caldwell.

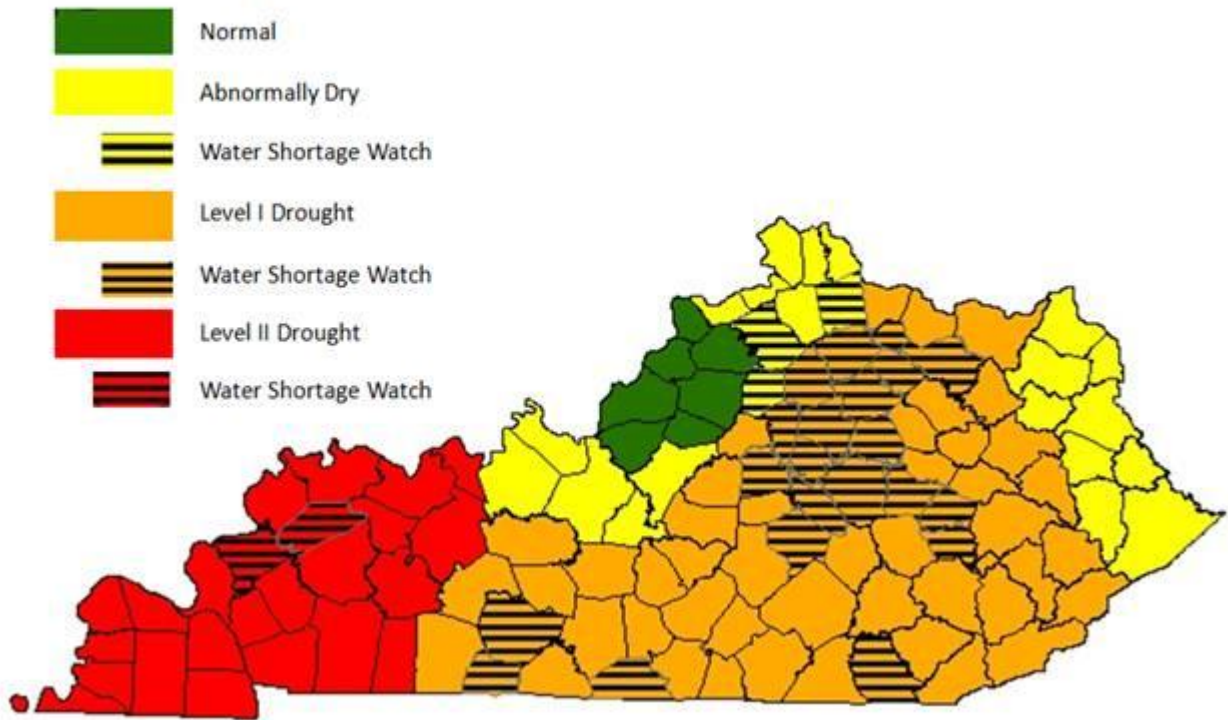
Visit the Division of Water website at <http://water.ky.gov/wa/Pages/Drought.aspx> for information about current drought conditions in Kentucky and water conservation measures. Visit this page to obtain information about how to contact your local health department: <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/LinkstoLocalHealthDepartments.htm>.

(MAP ATTACHED)

Kentucky Drought Status and Water Shortage Watch Areas

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Kentucky Drought Status



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